

Message Text

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SUBJECT: FLEXIBILITY PLAN FOR CENTRAL REGION

REFS: A. USNATO 3993; B. USNATO 3919; C. STATE 151981

1. CURRENT US INTEREST IN A PLAN FOR FLEXIBILITY IN THE CENTRAL REGION WAS GIVEN STRONG IMPETUS BY THE LETTER OF OCTOBER 23, 1973 FROM GENERAL GOODPASTER TO SECRETARY SCLESINGER WHICH SECRETARY SCHLESINGER FORWARDED TO ALL NATO MODS IN EARLY DECEMBER 1973 WITH THE CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL GOODPASTER. IN THE LETTER OF OCTOBER 23, SACEUR IDENTIFIED QTE SOME OF THE ACTION AREAS THAT ARE GEARED TO PROVIDING MUCH GREATER FLEXIBILITY FOR OUR FORCES THAN WE
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AVE TODAY, IN TERMS OF THE WAY THEY ARE CAPABLE OF BEING

EMPLOYED IN DEFENSE OPERATIONS. UNQTE. SACEUR STATED THAT THE DRIVING CONSIDERATION BEHIND HIS PROPOSAL TO BUILD GREATER FLEXIBILITY WAS THAT QTE WE ARE NOT NOW ABLE TO GET, FROM THESE POWERFUL AND EXPENSIVE FORCES, ANYTHING LIKE THE FULL SCALE OF EFFECTIVENESS THAT THEY SHOULD PROVIDE. UNQTE. WHILE HIS OBSERVATIONS DEALT WITH AIR AND GROUND FORCES IN THE CENTRAL REGION, HE NOTED THAT THE SAME POSSIBILITIES EXISTED AND NEEDED TO BE DEVELOPED THROUGHOUT ALL ELEMENTS OF THE COMMAND. US FOCUS FOR THIS SPECIFIC EXERCISE IS ON THE CENTRAL REGION, ALTHOUGH THE TEXT OF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD AT THE DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING OF JUNE 14, 1974, IN DISCUS-

SING FLEXIBILITY IN THE FLANKS, RECOGNIZED THE PROBLEM OF MARITIME FLEXIBILITY, EXPRESSING THE VIEW THAT NATO MUST BE PREPARED TO USE NAVAL ASSETS MUCH MORE FLEXIBLY.

2. AS INDICATED IN REF C, WE THINK THAT SACEUR SHOULD ADDRESS ALL APPROPRIATE ASPECTS OF FLEXIBILITY IN THE USE OF FORCES IN THE CENTRAL REGION, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO REINFORCEMENT PLANNING, LOGISTICS, STANDARDIZATION, COMMAND AND CONTROL, COMMON SUPPORTING PROGRAMS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND SUPPORT FROM THE CIVIL SECTOR.

3. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN IS TO IDENTIFY THE CONSTRAINTS WHICH MILITATE AGAINST FULL EFFECTIVENESS IN THE USE OF EXISTING FORCES AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE CENTRAL REGION AND TO PROPOSE IMMEDIATE AND LONGER-TERM ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE OR REDUCE THESE CONSTRAINTS.

4. PLAN SHOULD OUTLINE A CONTINGENCY ROLE FOR FRENCH FORCES AND SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT ALL FORCES WHICH MIGHT BECOME AVAILABLE IN THE DEFENSE OF THE CENTRAL REGION, WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE FORMALLY COMMITTED TO THE ALLIANCE.

5. A FIRST REPORT IDENTIFYING CONSTRAINTS AND OUTLINING THE SCOPE OF IMMEDIATE ACTIONS AND LONGER-TERM PROGRAMS TO BE CONSIDERED SHOULD BE READY FOR MINISTERIAL DISCUSSION.

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SION AT THE DECEMBER 1974 MEETING. WHILE CERTAIN DECISIONS ON REMEDIAL MEASURES MAY BE TAKEN AT THE DECEMBER MEETING, IT IS EXPECTED THAT FURTHER WORK MAY BE REQUIRED AFTER DECEMBER, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO LONGER-RANGE PROGRAMS.

6. WE WOULD PREFER NOT TO MAKE ANY JUDGMENT NOW ABOUT SUBSEQUENT STUDY OF FLEXIBILITY IN OTHER REGIONS, SINCE

PLAN FOR CENTRAL REGION WILL PROBABLY REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE
WORK AFTER DECEMBER.

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